

Application No.: 09/524,587
Amendment Dated: January 19, 2006
Reply to Office Action of: November 16, 2005

MAT-7927US

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 23-24, 26-27, 30-32, 34-36, 43 and 57-58 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Lindblad (US 5,404,277). It is respectfully submitted, however, that Applicants' claims are patentable over Lindblad for the reasons set forth below.

The Official Action rejected Applicants' claim 23 by interpreting Applicants' "inclined light reflecting plane" to be surface 17 of Lindblad (shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 of Lindblad). Specifically, the Official Action states that in Fig. 3 of Lindblad, inclined surface 17 is above light inlet plane 16. Furthermore, as shown in Fig. 2 of Lindblad, light ray 26 is shown traveling from left to right and reflecting off inclined plane 17.

In an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, Applicants' inclined light reflecting plane is analogous to Applicants' reflecting plane 43b (see Fig. 20). Thus, Applicants have now amended their claim to recite:

... an inclined light reflecting plane above said light inlet plane for directly reflecting light entering through said light inlet plane ...

In Lindblad, Fig. 2, the light reflecting off of plane 17 is indirectly reflected light, i.e., the light is reflected off of surface 22 before reaching surface 17. By contrast, in Applicants' light reflecting plane, the light reflected is directly reflected light, i.e. it is not reflecting off of another surface before striking Applicants' light reflecting plane. Accordingly, Applicants' claim 23 is patentable over the art of record.

Applicants' claims 32, 36 and 43 are also patentable over the art of record for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 23.

The remaining dependent claims are patentable by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims.

Claims 28 and 29 have been rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lindblad in view of Koike (US 5,528,709). These claims, however, are patentable by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims.

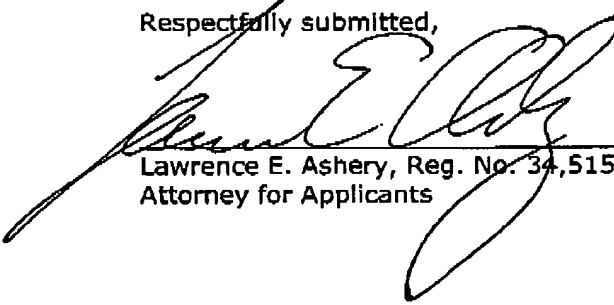
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Claims 59-60 are newly added. As shown in Applicants' Fig. 20, the angle of the light guide member in the upper left hand corner is smaller than the angle of the light guide member in the lower right hand corner. Allowance of the newly added claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: January 19, 2006

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January 19, 2006Deborah Spratt 

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